

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

October 25, 1983

Dear Mr. Speaker:

On October 12, a violent series of events in Grenada was set in motion, which led to the murder of Prime Minister Maurice Bishop and a number of his Cabinet colleagues, as well as the deaths of a number of civilians. Over 40 killings were reported. There was no government ensuring the protection of life and property and restoring law and order. The only indication of authority was an announcement that a barbaric shoot-to-kill curfew was in effect. Under these circumstances, we were necessarily concerned about the safety of innocent lives on the island, including those of up to 1,000 United States citizens.

The Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) became seriously concerned by the deteriorating conditions in the member State of Grenada. The other members of the OECS are Antigua, Dominica, Montserrat, St. Kitts/Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. We were formally advised that the Authority of Heads of Government of Member States of the OECS, acting pursuant to the Treaty establishing the OECS, met in emergency session on October 21. The meeting took note of the anarchic conditions and the serious violations of human rights and bloodshed that had occurred, and the consequent unprecedented threat to the peace and security of the region created by the vacuum of authority in Grenada. The OECS determined to take immediate, necessary steps to restore order in Grenada so as to protect against further loss of life, pending the restoration of effective governmental institutions. To this end, the OECS formed a collective security force comprising elements from member States to restore order in Grenada and requested the immediate cooperation of a number of friendly countries, including the governments of Barbados, Jamaica and the United States, in these efforts. In response to this call for assistance and in view of the overriding importance of protecting the lives of the United States citizens in Grenada, I have authorized the Armed Forces of the United States to participate along with these other nations in this collective security force.

In accordance with my desire that the Congress be informed on this matter, and consistent with the War Powers Resolution, I am providing this report on this deployment of United States Armed Forces.

Today at about 5:00 AM Eastern Daylight Time, approximately 1,900 United States Army and United States Marine Corps personnel began landing in Grenada. They were supported by elements of the United States Navy and the United States Air Force. Member States of the OECS along with Jamaica and Barbados are providing approximately 300 personnel. This deployment of United States Armed Forces is being undertaken pursuant to my constitutional authority with respect to the conduct of foreign relations and as Commander-in-Chief of the United States Armed Forces.

Although it is not possible at this time to predict the duration of the temporary presence of United States Armed Forces in Grenada, our objectives in providing this support are clear. They are to join the OECS collective security forces in assisting the restoration of conditions of law and order and of governmental institutions to the island of Grenada, and to facilitate the protection and evacuation of United States citizens. Our forces will remain only so long as their presence is required.

Sincerely,

Ronald Reagan

The Honorable Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr.
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510